BB•SLING

user's manual

babylonia

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› CONGRATULATIONS!

You have chosen to carry your baby in a sling. Babies across the globe are carried by their parents, siblings, and caregivers as they continue through their daily activities. A practice which benefits both the baby and the wearer as you will see. Before providing you with step-by-step instructions on how to wear your sling, we first want to explain why you should carry your baby. Take your time and read through the manual calmly. You do not have to become an expert in all the positions presented. Besides, not every baby will like every position. We present you with a large variety so that you and your baby can try them out and choose your favorites.

Learning to carry your baby comfortably is like learning to dance. It takes a little practice before the movements become second nature and you glide through them with your eyes closed. It is often helpful to practice adjusting the sling several times before placing your baby inside. It can also help to talk to your baby, explain what you are doing while placing him in the sling. Your baby will sense if you are uncomfortable. Tell him you are a bit insecure yourself but that you will learn how to do this together.

You will see, once you have learned to carry your baby, you will wonder how you ever lived without it. Not only does it make life easier, it provides sensory and motor development and much more.

Worn up next to you, your baby can participate in your activities. This interaction with the outside world will enhance his language and social development.

Want to read more about the benefits of carrying your baby? Here are a few of our favorites.

Granju, Katie Allison. ***Attachment Parenting: Instinctive care for your baby and young child***. *New York, New York: Pocket Books, 1999.*

Heller, Sharon. ***The Vital Touch: How Intimate Contact with Your Baby Leads to Happier, Healthier Development.*** *New York, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1997.*

Liedloff, Jane. ***The Continuum Concept: In search of happiness lost.*** Cambridge, Massachussetts: Perseus Books, 1985.

Sears, W. and Sears, M. ***The Attachment Parenting Book.*** *Boston, Massachusetts: Little Brown, 2001.*

Small, Meredith F. ***Our Babies, Ourselves: How Biology and Culture Shape the Way We Parent.*** New York, New York: Doubleday, 2001.

When using a baby carrier that is adapted to the wearer as well as the baby, it is possible to carry a child as long as he wishes. Children who are 2, 3, 4 or even 5 years old often get tired of walking and will ask to be carried. Holding a child of this age in your arms can put a lot of strain on one's shoulders and back. A baby carrier, however, will distribute the weight of the child evenly. As a child progressively gains his independence, he will go back and forth between wanting to do it all by himself, and wanting help from others. Contrary to popular belief, meeting his needs and reassuring him will boost his confidence and make him more independent.

BB•SLING › User's Manual

Please read through carefully before starting!

Babies Yearn for Skin

After nine months of warmth, movement and constant contact with mother, birth is a huge transition and babies are in need of intimate contact with their parents. Babies who are carried close to the body, visibly enjoy this direct physical contact. The cherishing body-to-body contact fulfils baby's primal and deep needs and offers an ideal position from which to discover the big wide world.

Safe and Secure

In a simple sling, your baby feels safe and secure. He feels your physical warmth and hears your voice and heartbeat. He recognizes your scent and can have permanent eye contact with you.

Babies Cry Less

Research indicates that babies who are carried on a daily basis cry significantly less. In a sling your baby is not forced to passively spend the day. He participates naturally in your daily activities. Hence, your baby can observe and hear quite a bit, which is beneficial for his psycho-social development. When he has had enough, your baby simply closes his eyes and falls asleep on your chest.

Stimulates balanced development

In the security of a sling, your baby experiences the world from a safe position. The huge amount of stimuli he has to deal with in a brief period of time does not frighten him because he is so close to you. This feeling of security results in the development of a positive self-image and later on, it forms the basis of a confident and assured personality. Contrary to old popular belief, it has become quite clear that carrying your baby in a sling does not lead to spoiled and dependent children, but that the opposite is accomplished.

And the father

During the first few months it is not always easy for a young father to develop an equally close bond with baby as the mother. However, with a sling, he can undertake a lot of things at a very early stage with the baby safely tucked on his chest.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is this type of carrier safe for the development of my baby's spine?
The basis of good posture begins with the pelvis. If this is well supported, the baby's spine and neck will fall into a natural curve and the weight will be supported by the pelvis. To ensure a correct position, the baby's knees should be higher than his pelvis, in a fetal position, or with his hips and legs properly supported. The baby's back should be rounded with his head resting on your body. This is the ideal position for the development of healthy hip joints. The baby does not hang or rest his weight on his coccyx, but comfortably rests against the wearer.

If the baby is in an upright position, it is essential that the legs do not dangle or hang in mid-air. This puts strain on the baby's spine and the baby will tend to arch backwards creating a bad position for his neck too.

The fetal tuck is the most natural position for a baby. Not only is this position good for correct spinal and hip development, it allows him to rest and use his energy to develop other strengths.

Does my baby's head need to be supported?
If your baby's pelvis is supported correctly as explained above, then her neck will follow a natural curve and her head will rest on your chest. She is free to lift her head when curious to look around and her neck muscles will strengthen quickly. There is no need for a head support, unless you are bending over.

How long can I safely carry my baby per day?
There are no limits. A baby well positioned in a sling can be carried as long as he and the wearer desire. Remember that babies around the world are carried throughout the entire day as the wearer continues about his or her daily tasks and activities.

Is this good for my own back?
If you have back problems, you should always consult with your doctor before using any baby carrier. This said, using a sling is probably one of the best ways to prevent back strain because the cloth carries the weight and not your arms and back as when you are simply holding your baby in your arms. Carry your baby each day and progressively extend the carrying time to allow your back muscles a chance to strengthen along with the baby's weight gain.

At what age can I start carrying my baby and when should I stop?
The benefits of carrying premature babies – or kangaroo care – is well documented. A baby (full term or premature) can be placed in a baby carrier just after birth, creating a 'womb with a view'. There are, of course, no problems starting later as well. Your back will strengthen as you carry your baby and his weight gains will go mostly unnoticed. A baby can be carried as long as he wants. Even an older child will find a safe refuge in a baby carrier when tired with the stimulations of the outside world.

Will my baby like being in a sling?
Babies crave close human contact. Once they are used to being carried, you will instinctively reach for your sling whenever your baby is fussy, can't fall asleep, or just needs a reassuring presence.

Some babies need a little adaptation time to a new position in the sling, especially on your back.

Sometimes babies are unhappy in a sling because they feel insecure. This is often the result of not adjusting the sling tight enough. Follow the instructions carefully to make sure you wear your baby high and tight.

We recommend trying a new position when your baby is relaxed, just after eating or ready to fall asleep. Walk around after placing your baby in the sling for the first time or when trying a new position. This will distract him while he gets used to a new way of being carried.

Most importantly, TRUST YOUR BABY. If your baby is uncomfortable, too tight, too hot, or whatever, he will let you know. If he is asleep or happily observing the world, then he is just fine. Carrying your baby

close means you can often read his body language well before he starts to cry or tell you something is wrong.

Will I spoil my baby and make him dependent on me?
Imagine you are thirsty. Sometimes you are given a glass of water and sometimes you are not. Your thirst is not quenched. You are forced to wait until the next time someone else decides you can have a glass of water. You become increasingly nervous and frustrated. You begin

Will my baby be able to breathe tucked into a sling?
Tucked snuggly into the sling, your baby is still able to move. If he is uncomfortable in any way, he can turn his head or wiggle his body in protest. Either he will shift and rectify the situation, or you can help adjust him to a more comfortable position. Held close to you, your baby will synchronize his breathing to your heartbeat and the rise and fall of your chest. This stabilizes his respiration.

to constantly ask for water, even when you are not thirsty, because you are not sure that when you will be thirsty, you will be given some water. You become insecure when you do not have water available. You are so preoccupied with having enough water that you are unable to think about anything else.

Now imagine the opposite scenario. You are thirsty. You are immediately given water, however much you need to quench your thirst. You are satisfied and can go on about whatever you were doing without worry. You are reassured because the water is in abundant supply and you can have some whenever you need it. You feel secure in this knowledge and the physical presence of the water is not always necessary. You are worry free and can put your energy into other activities.

Now imagine these two scenarios with your baby and his need for close physical contact and reassurance. You decide.

Will my baby be too hot or too cold in a sling?
Newborn babies are not capable of regulating their body temperature. The adult's body will stabilize the baby's body temperature when holding them close. Dress yourself and your baby accordingly. Remember that your body heat will be considered one layer and the sling itself is a second. In cold weather, your coat over both of you is a third layer. Just make sure that whatever extremities are exposed are well protected from the sun and/or the cold.

Meeting your baby's needs by carrying him close to you creates a secure and self-confident child.

› GETTING STARTED

When you use the sling for the first time you may feel a bit awkward or unsure. The best time to try the sling is when your baby is calm, having just eaten and is ready to fall asleep. Once you have placed your baby in the sling, walk around to distract your baby while she adapts to a new way of being carried. If she is fussy and does not calm down after a few minutes, take her out and try again later. Once you have practiced a few times, you will see that the sling is really the perfect way to comfort a restless baby.

› WARNINGS

Common sense is the best prevention of accidents when wearing your baby in a carrier. Some practical points are:

- When leaning over, always support your baby's head with your hand or a band of fabric.
- Cooking with your baby in a carrier can be tempting, but be careful! Your curious baby can reach over and grab something (knife, hot pan, bowl of liquid, etc.)
- Remember that wearing your baby changes your spatial dimensions. Be careful when walking through narrow spaces, low doors, etc.
- Do not ride a bike while carrying your baby in a carrier.

› TYING TIPS

TIP

The bottom seam can be adjusted by pulling at the corresponding seam through the rings.

TIP

The top seam can also be adjusted with the corresponding seam through the rings.

NO

Don't carry the baby too low

NO

or too loose. Your back will hurt from the strain.

TIP

Take your baby out by loosening the fabric through the rings and pulling baby out of fabric. You do not have to remove the entire sling.

TIP

Use the open tail to provide more privacy when baby is nursing, sleeping or simply wants to play hide-and-seek!

TIP

Keep your baby within kissing distance. You should be able to kiss the baby's head easily without bending over.

TIP

In cold weather, make sure baby's legs are covered with their pants. Often you will need to pull their pant legs down as they slide up when being put in the sling. Parents find that it is helpful for baby to wear pants one size larger than usual to ensure the entire leg remains covered.

› THREADING YOUR SLING

1. Gather the fabric without twisting it, keeping the seams on the outside.

2. Place the end through the rings.

3. Pass over the top ring and thread it through the bottom ring.

4. Put the sling on and pull fabric through the rings. Be careful not to twist it.

5. The bottom seam can be adjusted by pulling the corresponding seam through the rings.

6. The top seam also can be adjusted with the corresponding seam through the rings.

7. To loosen the sling, simply lift the bottom ring and the baby's weight will pull the fabric through the rings.

It is not necessary to completely unthread the sling each time you take it on and off. This is only necessary when washing and drying.

› THE FINAL POSITION FOR THE RINGS SHOULD BE

Just below your shoulder, with the fabric spread across your shoulder

or closer together on top of your shoulder.

NOT close up to your neck.

NOT on top of your shoulder.

NOT too far down the middle of your chest.

› TO BEGIN FOR ALL POSITIONS

1. Determine which hip you wish to place the baby on, and place the sling over the opposite shoulder with the 'tail' facing forward.

2. Tighten the sling through the rings, leaving just enough slack to place the baby inside.

3. Start out with the rings high on your shoulder as they will move down once you place the baby and tighten the end.

4. Make sure the fabric lies flat across your back and is not twisted.

› CRADLE

This position is ideal for carrying a newborn baby and for hands free breastfeeding. Some babies may feel lost in the fabric and will prefer the upright position of the Heart-to-Heart.

See page 8 to begin.

1. Pull open the band and fold it in half to create a pocket.

2. Tighten the inner rail so that it lies flat and snug across your chest. Make sure the rings rest high on your shoulder.

3. The outer rail should be a bit looser to allow you to place the baby inside.

NOTE:

When beginning, leave some distance between the baby's head and the rings, so there is enough space to adjust his position once the fabric is tightened, and his head is not stuck in the corner of the hamac.

4. Resting the baby high on your shoulder, place it feet first into the pocket

4.a To place the baby's head next to the rings, direct the baby's feet down around your side.

4.b To place the baby's head away from the rings, direct the baby's feet towards the rings.

5. Lay the baby's hips, shoulder's and then head into the pocket.

6. The baby can be placed facing your stomach

7. or looking upwards

8. or looking out.

9. While supporting the baby with one hand, tighten the outer rail until it is snug.

10. In either position, the baby's head should be higher than the feet.

TIP

The baby should be held tightly enough that you can let go with both hands.

TIP

Make sure the baby is resting above your waist, placed as high and tight as possible.

TIP

The baby should remain snug close to you when you bend over.

If you find the rings are too close to the baby once you've tightened them, loosen the fabric a bit, then supporting the baby with your arm, slide the sling and rings higher towards your shoulder to reposition.

OUT

To remove your baby, simply loosen the fabric and lift the baby out of the sling.

To breastfeed while carrying your baby in the cradle hold, loosen the fabric enough so that the baby can reach your breast. Once he is latched on, retighten your sling to hold the baby in place and you can continue to nurse while standing or walking.Use the open tail to provide more privacy when baby is nursing, sleeping or simply wants to play hide-and-seek!

› HEART TO HEART

Many babies appreciate being carried upright and on your chest. This position can be used with all ages, but is especially comfortable for a newborn or a baby under a year old. When they get older and heavier, you'll find it more comfortable for them to sit on your hip.

OPTION 1: KEEPING THE BABY'S LEGS TUCKED INTO THE FABRIC

See page 8 to begin.

1. Fold the fabric in two to create a pocket.

2. Tighten the inner rail so that it lays flat and tight across your chest.

3. The outer rail should be a bit looser to allow you to place the baby inside.

4. Resting the baby on your free shoulder, slide the baby feet first into the pocket. The baby will naturally fold her legs up into a frog-like position.

NOTE:

Leave some distance between the baby and the rings, so the fabric can spread open wider across his body for better support and security.

5. Supporting the baby with one hand, pull the outer rail tight across the shoulders of the baby.

6. The baby should rest comfortably on your chest and be snug enough so that she does not fall to the side.

› HEART TO HEART

OPTION 2: WEARING THE BABY WITH LEGS OUT

See page 8 to begin.

1. Resting the baby on your free shoulder, lift the band up over the baby

2. and spread it out under the baby's bottom.

3. Pull the top rail up to the baby's shoulders.

4. Supporting the baby with one hand, pull the remaining fabric through the rings.

5. Pull on the corresponding rail to tighten under the bottom of the baby.

6. Pull on the opposite rail to tighten the fabric at the baby's shoulders.

7. Make sure the fabric is spread out under her bottom and reaches out to her knees.

8. The baby can keep her arms inside the band

9. or leave them out.

TIP

Use the open tail to cover baby when he is nursing or sleeping, to protect him from wind or rain, or just to play hide-and-seek!

TIP

If the rings fall in the wrong place, lift your baby up, grab hold of the band and the tail in one hand and shift the rings to the correct position. Reposition your baby in the sling.

› FACING OUT - BUDDHA

Curious babies enjoy facing out for full interaction with the outside world. Use this position once your baby can hold his head up alone. Always keep one arm free to support your baby. He could risk falling out if he leans forward.

See page 8 to begin.

1. Fold the fabric in two to create a pocket.

2. Rest the baby high up on your shoulder, facing upwards, with legs folded in the lotus position.

3. Sit her down into the pouch.

4. Lift the outer seam high up to the baby's chin level, then remove your hand from your baby.

5. Supporting your baby and the sling high on your chest, tighten the outer rail so that your baby can not slip from side to side.

6. Your baby should be high and tight against you. From here she can safely observe the world around her.

› HIP

Once your baby can sit up on her own, you'll probably find the hip position to be the most comfortable. The baby straddles your hip which helps distribute the weight better. The sling should be worn snug so that the baby does not lean back or move around too much. If they do, it will create a counter-weight to your own body and become very heavy. This position is also ideal for an active toddler who wants in and out all the time as they explore the world but get tired and often need reassurance.

See page 8 to begin.

1. Spread open the band.

2. Resting the baby on your free shoulder, place the band over the baby's legs.

3. Sit the baby on your hip and pull the band up over her bottom.

4. Pull the top rail up to the baby's neck.

5. Supporting the baby with one hand, pull the remaining fabric through the rings.

6. Tighten the bottom rail enough so that you do not have to support the baby with your arm.

7. Tighten the top rail so that the baby is pulled in snug next to you.

8. Make sure the bottom of the fabric is spread out to her knees.

9. The baby can leave her arms inside the fabric

10. or out of the fabric.

TIP

Use the open tail to cover baby when he is nursing or sleeping, to protect him from wind or rain, or just to play hide-and-seek!

TIP

You can move your arm in front of your baby when leaning forward or if you want to remove her from a dangerous situation.

NO

Don't let the baby sit too far down on your hip.

NO

Don't leave the fabric loose so that the baby leans back away from your side.

› BACK

An older toddler will enjoy riding on your back. You will enjoy the freedom of movement without a large child in front of you.

See page 8 to begin.

1. Start with the rings in the center of your back and the tail in front of you.

2. Open the band on your hip.

3. Resting the baby on your free shoulder, reach underneath the band

4. and pull the baby's legs completely through the band, spread his legs apart and sit him on your hip.

5. Pull the top rail up to the baby's neck.

6. Make sure the bottom of the fabric is spread out to his knees.

7. Leaning forward, pass your arm over and in front of your baby, while resting on your hip.

8. Grab the tail in your other hand.

9. In one movement, slide the baby to your back and the tail and rings around to the front.

10. Pull the fabric through the rings until it is tight.

11. Adjust the top and

12. bottom rails separately as needed.

13. The rings should rest just below your shoulder. If they are too low, start over with them further down your back.

14. The baby can keep his arms in

15. or pull them out.

OUT

To remove the baby, simply loosen the fabric

and slide the baby back to your hip.

› TWINS

Your babies spent nine months on top of one another in the womb, so they will often be very happy to find themselves close together again! Carrying two babies can be very handy when needed.

Carrying just one baby at a time can also make a big difference. A fussy baby can go in the sling and free your hands to tend to the other. And it's very easy to carry one and push the other when going out.

As demonstrated here, there are several positions which are possible to use with twins. We recommend practicing in front of a mirror and with a doll, or two, to familiarize yourself with the techniques first. Follow the instructions already explained for the various positions, adapting slightly for placing twins.

» CRADLE

Place first baby in the reclining position with head towards the rings. Then place the twin in the opposite direction, facing inwards. Your babies will naturally grow out of this position.

» HEART - TO - HEART

Place one baby over each breast, facing inwards, with legs out.

» HIP

It's possible to use two slings and carry each twin on one hip.

TIP

Place one baby in a sling on your hip before placing the second sling and baby on opposite hip.

TIP

Bands should lie flat across your back.

› OTHER **BABYLONIA** PRODUCTS

TRI•COTTI

TRICOT•SLEN

BB•SLEN

BB•BACKPACK

THANK YOU!!

If your baby could talk, he would thank you for buying a sling. But since he probably cannot talk yet, we're happy to thank you on his behalf as well as ours! We sincerely hope you will enjoy your BB•SLING and get many years of use out of it.

We have done our best to provide you with a detailed manual full of helpful tips on carrying your baby. If you still have questions after reading through it carefully, we suggest you try to find someone who can help you in person. Look for midwife and breastfeeding organizations in your neighborhood. You may even find one of the growing number of baby carrying organizations who conduct regular workshops to help you learn how. A search for 'baby carriers' on the internet will bring up a wealth of information. We are always interested to know how people like our carriers. We would love to hear your stories and see your photos. Send them to **babycarriers@babylonia.be**

Carrying your baby undeniably has its advantages for both you and your baby. But who can teach you how? Babylonia has created a very special manual for the BB•SLING. The **Introduction** and **Frequently Asked Questions** sections will provide you with information on the benefits of carrying your baby and answer all those questions you have wondered about. The **Getting Started** section provides you with some essential tips. Then each position is described with **detailed, step-by-step photographs** demonstrating each method from beginning to end and with lots of helpful tips included along the way. You will be hard pressed to find a more complete guide on how to use your sling!

What makes the **BB•SLING** special?

BB•SLING by Babylonia is a high quality sling made with non-toxic dyes. It is specially woven to wrap around the curves of the baby and the wearer while remaining strong and supportive to distribute the weight evenly.

Babylonia strives to offer you the highest quality of carrier at an affordable price. We only work with organizations that ensure the workers are paid appropriate wages and have suitable working conditions as well as much more. Read more about this on our website: www.babylonia.be

How should I care for my BB•SLING ?

To keep your BB•SLING in optimal condition, we recommend washing it in 40 degree water and hang to dry.

We have done our best to provide you with detailed instructions on how to use your BB•SLING. You are responsible for following the instructions and using your sling properly. Use common sense when carrying your baby. An uncooperative child can climb out of a sling. Always keep hands available to protect the baby from any possible danger. Babylonia is not responsible for injuries or loss of life incurred while using this product.

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